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IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) A composition for thickening hydrophobic liquids comprising a layered silicate material, surfaces of said layered silicate material modified by an amphipathic copolymer comprising ~~a first comonomer that generates a hydrophilic homopolymer that is essentially insoluble in a hydrophobic liquid and a second comonomer that generates a hydrophobic homopolymer that is soluble in a hydrophobic liquid~~ poly(ethylene glycol-30)-co-dipoly(hydroxystearate), polydimethylsiloxane-polyoxyethylene 15 polymer/3-isocyanatomethyl-3,5,5-trimethylcyclohexyl isocyanate copolymer, or a mixture thereof.

2. (Original) The composition of claim 1 further comprising a thickening aid.

3. (Original) The composition of claim 2 wherein the thickening aid is selected from the group consisting of propylene carbonate, hexylene glycol, ethanol, propylene glycol, butylene glycol, water, and mixtures thereof.

4. (Previously amended) The composition of claim 34 wherein the hydrophobic liquid comprises one or more nonpolar liquid having a dielectric constant of less than about 10.